Neville Goddard

THE FLOOD IS STILL UPON US

[The tape starts in the middle of a sentence]…describing things that happened unnumbered years ago, but I tell you it's contemporary. You read about the flood, and you think: "Well, certainly that happened unnumbered (if it ever did happen) – it happened unnumbered years ago."

This morning, as is my custom, I turned on channel KFAC. That is a radio station that plays through the day and night, twenty-four hours a day, only lovely classical music; so you can read to that music – only a few interruptions. On the hour, you get a five-minute bulletin and weather report. But between 9:00 and 10:00 o'clock there is always a lovely piano recital, as it were – the great masterpieces played by great artists. So I can sit down with my Bible and read as I listen to the music. And the one interruption that came today was an ad from the Herald-Examiner. They were advertising this paper as the one paper in our city that gives the facts – only facts, not embellished, no frills – just plain fact, all facts. That's why we should buy that paper, because it is simply filled with facts.

Well, facts have overflowed the world like the flood. Man actually is "drowned" with facts, victimized by facts. It is in the Imagination that everything lives, and not in its actuality, not in the fact. Unless Imagination penetrates the facts, the deluge remains a deluge. We are now in the deluge. This is the flood!

A man is in jail. That's a fact. And he knows he's there for "x" number of years; that's a fact. And he simply waits and hopes that in some strange way he will get some early release from this confinement. He never uses his Imagination, save in some violent way to get out, but not to penetrate the fact. When in March of 1943, by using my Imagination to penetrate the fact I, too, was in "prison" in the Army, but I didn't want any part of it. So, I simply penetrated the fact and saw myself in New York City, in my own apartment with my family. And in nine days I was out, honorably discharged, in my apartment in New York City.

I wrote a friend of mine who was in the army. He was my age. He was a Freudian, – a professional psychoanalyst, but Freud was his background. That was his schooling. When I wrote him in detail exactly what I had done (I didn't mince matters; I told him exactly what I did): as I physically slept on my little bed in the barracks, I imagined I was simply elsewhere. The "elsewhere" was a definite spot in space: New York City, in my apartment. I told him what I did. I could "feel" the bed. I could "feel" the things in my house. I went about feeling all the familiar objects in my apartment, and I gave it all the tones of reality and all the sensory vividness to the best of my ability. I "touched" everything, and it felt real, and then I went back to sleep. Then I told exactly what happened to me that morning; and then nine days later, I was honorably discharged by the same man who had disallowed my application.

He didn't answer my letter. In New York City he used to come to my meetings as a friend because he was so convinced that the Freudian concept was true. He said: "I come to your meetings for this reason, Neville ..." (We knew each other well. He'd come home for dinner; I'd go to his place for dinner) … but he said: "I come to your meetings because you turn my daily

bread into the substance of fairy. I sort of like that," he said. "But when I listen to you I hold the chair and I put my feet right firmly on the ground to feel the reality and the profundity of things. You aren't going to take me away with you. You are going to leave me right here where things are solidly real, so I feel the place under my foot and I feel the things next to my hands. I hold on tightly while you weave your story concerning moving off in one's imagination." He would not penetrate the facts. So, when did he get out? When the other millions got out. So he remained with his facts for the next three years! I got out in March of 1943; he came home to New York City in 1946, demobilized as the other millions and millions of boys were. He could not let go [of] the facts. This is the flood – there is no other flood – this is the flood. We are "drowned" with facts, victimized by them.

Now, does the Bible teach this story of getting through the facts using my Imagination? It certainly does. Let me take you into the 27th chapter of the book of Genesis (the first book, the Book of the Beginnings). If you are not familiar with the story of Isaac and his two sons (they were twins) let me just refresh your memory if you have forgotten it. It is said in the story that Isaac had (that is, his wife Rebecca had) the two sons, but he was the father of the two sons, Esau and Jacob. It is said that Esau was a hairy one. He came first. And then Jacob came second, and he had no hair. He was completely hairless, while Esau was covered in hair from head to foot; but he was the first. One was called Esau, and one was called Jacob because he came second and supplanted the other.

Now we are told that when the father, Isaac, was old and his eye was dim so that he could not see (in other words, he was blind), he said to his son Esau:

"I cannot see and my days are numbered. I want you to go into the fields and hunt and bring me some well-prepared, tasty venison as I like it, savory venison." We are told that Rebecca (who loved her second son more than she did the first) overheard the conversation between Esau and his father. And then because she loved Jacob and wanted Jacob to get the blessing … for the father feels his days are numbered and he must now give his blessing to one of his sons, and the first one must get it.

So the mother told Jacob what she had heard and then suggested that: "… we take one of the kids from the flock and we kill it and take the skins of the kid and put it upon you, so that you will have the appearance of Esau." Jacob thought otherwise. "Suppose my father discovers it?" And the mother said: "Leave that to me. It will be on my shoulder if he discovers it," and sent Jacob into the field to bring the kid.

Well, he took that kid and brought it tastily prepared for his father. He came quickly into the presence of the father, and the father said to him: "Come near that I may feel you, my son, whether you are my son Esau or not." So Jacob came near to Isaac, his father, who felt him; and then Isaac said to Jacob: "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau." And then he blessed him. He gave him his blessing. He had no sooner left the presence of his father when Esau comes in now with the savory venison, and the father said, "Who was it that came, for I have already eaten? Who came?" And then he discovered that it was his son, Jacob, who came with guile and betrayed him. "But," said the father, "I have given him your blessing, and I

cannot retract it, and blessed he is. All will serve him. Everyone will serve him, because I gave him the blessing and I cannot take it back."

On the surface you will say: Now what is the story trying to tell us? Well, in this same book, in an earlier passage, we are told about the ark. "Build the ark with three decks: the lower, the second and the third deck." (Genesis 6:14 ff.) You think it's a huge big building. Well, use your imagination. You cannot conceive of any building that could house all the animals of the world in pairs, and all the so-called "good" ones, who will be in seven pairs, and enough food to feed them for forty days and forty nights. Well, you just simply could not conceive of it; nevertheless that's the story. But there are three decks. The obvious thing is the facts of life, then the psychological interpretation of these so-called stories, and then the spiritual consummation of the story. So you have the lower deck, the second deck, and then the third deck.

So, here is a perfect example of the second deck. This room, now, is a fact. We are all here in the room. It's a fact. But suppose I don't want to be here. Suppose it becomes a prison to me. Can I get out of it? If I know how to penetrate the fact – if I know that I am the ark: that "All things exist in the human imagination," [Wm. Blake, from "Jerusalem"] and the human imagination and God are one – they are one, not two – I can in my imagination penetrate any wall. I can now, without batting an eye, in the twinkle of an eye I can stand on the street and see this thing [indicating the podium] without a man standing before it. It is no problem whatsoever to assume I am on the street, and looking from the street to this platform.

But you may say: "Well, what would that do?" Well, let me do it and feel the reality, feel the solidity, of the street under my foot and see this building from the street rather than looking to the street from here. If I do it and give it solidity, give it reality, I'll be compelled to go there. This is what Scripture teaches. That is my "blessing." I can penetrate a fact, and penetrating a fact I can stand wherever I want to stand in this world.

Then the promise is made: "Wherever the sole of your foot shall stand, that I have given to you." (Deuteronomy 11:24) I am not going to make you a promise and not fulfill it; I'll give it to you if you can stand upon it. So, I actually "stood" upon my apartment; I actually stood upon that floor and I felt the bed. I felt everything and gave it reality. My friend wouldn't allow himself to sleep in one place and assume that he was sleeping elsewhere, because that is a divided state of mind. He didn't want to become a split personality. So, he wanted to be completely coordinated. Well, he was coordinated all right, for the next three years, all in one little spot in his barracks. And for three years he couldn't get out, because – first of all – he wouldn't try it, because I turned his "daily bread into the substance of fairy." So he did not answer my letter. I have reminded him a few times since: "Why didn't you answer the letter?"

"Well, first of all, it didn't make sense, and I don't believe," said he, "that really what you did was the sole cause of your discharge." He always questioned it. Then I'd repeat it another time and tell him again what happened this time. "Well, that would have happened anyway." Then you do it a third time and you do it a fourth time. Do you know: if you did it a thousand times he would still say: "Do it once more." It will always happen, as far as they are concerned. It just didn't' happen because you did something; these things would have happened anyway. I asked: "Why do you analyze people then and let things happen?"

"We are not the creatures of circumstance," said a man who bears your name, for his first name is Israel; and Disraeli's name is simply "of Israel" – Benjamin Disraeli. He said: "Man is not the creature of circumstances; circumstances are the creatures of men." He knew how to create things all in his imagination.

So I said: "You bear the name of Israel, but you don't apply the story of Israel. If you'd only apply it … why, these things are taught us in Scripture." Scripture is not secular history; this is contemporary. It didn't happen thousands of years ago. The Flood is on! This is the Flood. The whole vast world is inundated with "facts," like the prominent papers, the evening paper, "The Examiner," and they are proud of the fact that they only print "facts." They don't embellish it – no frills, only the facts. Therefore buy the facts, and they go all over the world to find frightening facts. I am not denying that he didn't kill her; I am not denying that he did not receive a sentence of "x" number of years. But when people ask anything of me, I am not concerned about why it happened. What do you want? And I will simply apply my Imagination lovingly on behalf of that request. I don't care what brought you to that state; I am here to simply get you out of the state. What do you want? All through the Bible: what do you want? He didn't condemn anyone. The woman taken in adultery, he didn't condemn her. What do you want? "Go and sin no more." He didn't call the act of adultery a sin. If she called it (or they called it) a sin – all right, call it a sin. Therefore, don't repeat it if you call it a sin.

"Sin" is simply knowing what to do, but not doing it. That's sinning. So, if I discover what to do to penetrate a fact: to go beyond the fact and create a condition for myself and dwell in it and think from it instead of thinking of it … for the great fallacy of the world is perpetual construction – deferred occupancy, to create and create in my mind's eye all kinds of lovely things I would like to realize but never occupy them. I do not penetrate the state and go right into it, and give it cubic reality. But I know – and you know – and it's not difficult to understand why the sense of touch is something we believe in more profoundly than we do in, say, the sense of sight, or the sense of hearing, or the sense of smell.

I stumbled upon this one day in a dream. In my dream I came upon this huge, big pillar – a pile driven into the ocean, and the bridge that it formerly supported was gone now. Only the piles remained. And I knew I was dreaming, and I figured to myself if I held that pile and I could touch it, if it seemed to me solidly real, what I am going to do: I'm going to hold onto that pile in the dream. I know it's a dream, but I am going to hold that as solidly as I can and compel myself to awake holding the pile. Well, I did. I held the pile with all my might. I said, "Now, Neville, you know you are sleeping. You know that you are dreaming now. So awake!" And I awoke in the water, actually holding that pile and I am standing up in what formerly I knew to be a dream. It ceased to be a dream; it's real. I'm in a world just as real as this and here I am, holding this enormous pile, and it's in the East Indies (not the West Indies where I was born) – it was in the East Indies, a very primitive area. And then some animal came down to the beach – a strange-looking creature, and at that moment I was a little bit … I was panicky. In that moment of shaking emotion I awoke on my bed in New York City.

But I discovered that secret of feeling. So, he said: "Come close, come near, that I may feel you, my son." He heard the voice; he said: "Your voice is the voice of Jacob. Come near and let me see really if you are Esau. And he did it by feeling.

So, lying on my bed one night right here in Beverly Hills many years ago (it must have been fourteen or fifteen years ago) I suddenly became aware that I am seeing what I shouldn't see. I am looking into the most marvelous interior of a plush hotel, it seemed that way to me. So, consciousness followed vision and I found myself in the room, but I knew I was on the bed. So I came back to the bed. I am still seeing the interior of the room, and I went back into that room. I came back again. I must have done it twelve or twenty times. It was fun going into the room; and the room was just like this – real, and then I came back to the bed.

Now I said: “l am now going to explore. Regardless of consequences I am going to explore." So I went into the room. It seemed like a room thirty-by-twenty from the bed, but when I entered it with the decision to explore, the room closed in upon me and became a third of itself. Say, it became ten-by-seven, and I found it was a dressing room for a huge, big suite, beautifully done, but it wasn't yet occupied. It was there to be occupied, but the room at the moment – that is, the suite – was not occupied. And I thought: "Well, now I will go through the door." I didn't go through like some gossamer; I opened the door with my hand and I walked right through that doorway. I was solidly real to myself. Then I walked down the corridor, and the corridor that I walked down was intersected by the main corridor and all the lights were on. And two ladies were coming down that corridor, the main one. But I knew this thing began as a dream. So, I knew that all ends run true to origins, therefore if the origin is a dream, this is a dream. So I said to the ladies: "Ladies, this is a dream. This whole vast world is a dream.” Then they were afraid of me.

Who wouldn't be afraid of a man who suddenly appears at a place where you are walking and tells you this whole vast world is a dream? You would think he's nuts – he is insane. So, they thought I was insane and they got just as far as they could from me and walked right next to the wall, duck-style – one behind the other, looking at me very suspiciously. Then I saw this object hanging from space. It reminded me of a similar object I had seen in a friend's home in North Hollywood. So, I said to them: "Look, see this?" And I held it, and to my surprise it isn't gossamer. This is not an after-image. This is not a memory image. This is real. The thing is solid. Well, I held it; and by this time, they were way down. They took one last look as they looked back at me and then darted into the main room. And here I am, standing alone holding onto this thing. I said to myself: "Neville, you know this is a dream. The origin is a dream; the end is a dream. Come on, wake up!" I closed my eyes to the obvious and held this thing here, and I couldn't … I opened my eyes again I am still standing there. I said: "How am I going to get back to my room in Beverly Hills?" I didn't know what … there was no place I could go to take me back there, but I remembered: Feeling is the secret.

I am holding this here now, and it's real. It is solid. I am solid. They are solid. They heard my voice. And I walked down and every step was solidly real as walking here now. So, I imagined that my head was on a pillow; and when I could feel a pillow under my head while I am standing, I suddenly felt myself in a horizontal position, and my head is on a pillow. Then all of a sudden I could feel that pillow, but I was cataleptic. I couldn't open my eyes. I couldn't move a

hand. I couldn't move a finger. Here I am, a living being in a dead body! So I said to myself: "They will find the body tomorrow morning, and they've got to cut it up," because I am insured for a little bit, and to prove that nobody took my life they have to cut it up to find out why he died. They always have to ask that question, and they give it a name. If they can't find it they have to give it a name anyway.

So, here I am. I couldn't open my eyes; I couldn't move my hand. In about fifteen or twenty seconds (it seemed much longer than that) my little finger, I could move it, and then I could move my hand a bit. I still couldn't open my eyes. We were sleeping in a double bed so I pushed my hand out – my left hand – and I could feel the warmth of my wife's body. At that, I knew I was back on my bed. In another fifteen or twenty seconds I could, with great effort, open the lids of my eyes, and here came all the familiar objects – on the walls, on the bureau, everything returned to consciousness.

Now, I had stepped into a world just as real as this. I am telling you, there are worlds within worlds within worlds, and they are all here – right here – just like turning on a radio. You turn it ever so slightly, and you have a new wave length and a new station coming in, bringing in something entirely different. And they are not interfering with each other! And these worlds are all here now and they are peopled, just as we are peopling this world, and they are just as real as this world. It's terrestrial and it doesn't…you don't have to walk to it. I was on the bed. I seemed to walk into it – I would say … what? ten feet away, but the same area permeated the bed, and the bed did not obstruct it; and that world into which I stepped did not obstruct the house that I lived in, in Beverly Hills. It's all here – the whole vast world – worlds within worlds within worlds!

So, I tell you: "facts" are the Flood. That's the deluge. There was no other kind of flood. We are actually inundated with the "facts of life." And these facts – we change them every day. Today this is the cause of so-and-so. Tomorrow that's not so; it is another cause we have found, and the next day another cause. But while we haven't found the next cause, we believe that to be the fact, and we worship the facts. So I tell you: all things are in the human Imagination. "Man is all imagination; and God is man, and exists in us and we in Him." [Blake, from "Annotations to Berkeley] "The Eternal Body of man is the imagination. And that is God Himself." [Blake, from "The Laocoon"][1]

There is no other god. It's all your own wonderful human imagination. And the one thing the whole vast world aches for is the awakening of the imagination. And when it comes, it comes with the birth of the promised child which sets a man free from the horrors of this world we call "the world of nature." For Nature is simply that principle on which depends the sameness of forms in transmitted light. And so the thing goes, over and over.

Haven't you observed a year – that at a certain time of the year – money is tight? All of a sudden it flows and then at a certain time of the year it stops. Why? It's a habit. It's a transmitted state. You fix that fact in your mind's eye; and if you got fifty thousand dollars today and say it's the month of December when money is always tight – you are going to loan the money out or give it away before December comes by; so when it comes by, you are going to be tight again. It's a

[1] Neville often quotes both these passages from Blake together.

peculiar – I would say "slavery" – this thing called "Nature," in the sameness of forms in transmitted light.

Now, you can penetrate the fact and break it; and that's what we are here to teach. "I come, not to abolish the law and the prophets" – I come not to abolish them – "but to fulfill them" (Matthew 5:17) – and to tell you the real Law. It's not washing your hands before meals, although that is a very nice, clean thing to do. It's not giving certain diets, doing this, that and the other. He explains that the entire Law is psychological. He takes one of the Commandments, which is a graphic one, to show you how everything must be interpreted psychologically.

He said, "You have heard it said of old, you shall not commit adultery. But I, say unto you, any man who looks lustfully upon a woman has already committed the act in his heart with her." (Matthew 5:27, 28)

Well, what man hasn't? What man has not violated that? So, he tells you the whole thing is a psychological thing. You cannot restrain the impulse. You may restrain it, based upon a thousand little reasons. Maybe you are afraid of the consequences. Maybe you are afraid that someone will find out. Maybe you are afraid of this, that and the other; but the impulse was there, and he tells you the impulse is the act. Well, if the impulse is the act, then creative acts are imaginal, for it was an imaginal act; so I have to observe my imaginal acts, for the imaginal act is a fact. It's going to actually become a fact, and then it will confront me.

There was a lady in San Francisco. She said, "My brother"– and she said to me, "I think he's innocent, but I do not know the facts of the case; but he was given six months at hard labor. He is in the Army. And I don't think my brother should get six months' hard labor in the Army."

I said, "You want him out?"

She said, "Certainly I do."

I said, "I tell you what. You may try it, so that you may give all praise to yourself and not to me. You do it."

"Well, what must I do?"

"If he was out, would he come home?"

"Oh, yes, he'd come straight to my place."

"All right. And if he came to your place, what would you do?"

"Well," she said, "I would throw my arms around him and kiss him, feel him."

I said, "All right, do that. When you go home tonight sit where you would normally sit, and just imagine that your brother is there and that you have thrown your arms around him and you are holding him and hugging him, and kissing him."

The next Sunday morning in my meeting in San Francisco, that woman could rise and tell this story. She said, "I went home, and I imagined I heard the doorbell ring; and the doorbell is downstairs. I have to run down one flight of stairs to answer that door. So, I heard it ring and I ran downstairs, and I flung the doors open, and here stood my brother. I went back upstairs. There was no brother, but I did it so vividly that it was almost like a disappointment that I didn't actually see him standing there, because it seemed so real to me."

Well, a few days later she was sitting upstairs and the doorbell rang. She said, "I almost broke my neck to get downstairs. I knew what was going to happen." As she threw the door open, here was her brother!

She stood up in the audience and told that story to the thousand who were present that Sunday morning. They all saw her. No one, I presume, would go and verify it; I trusted her implicitly. If she lied to me, then it's entirely up to her; but I am convinced the whole thing was true.

I don't check on you. I believe you when you tell me that it happened. But the thing is to practice. We are the operant power. And the Flood is on. Let no one tell you the Flood is over. And the Flood is deeper and deeper, because we are more and more inclined for facts – the "facts of life." Do you want the facts? Well, you had better make the prison walls all the thicker. But learn how to penetrate the facts.

As you penetrate the facts, you must go to a certain objective beyond the fact. What do you want now? Well then, you go into the state of the wish fulfilled. What is the state? You decide. You determine what you want in this world, and you go right into that state, and then ignore the facts.

Suppose the facts now still deny what you did. It doesn't matter. Let the facts remain; they will dissolve. They will all dissolve because you are going to remain faithful and you will occupy the state. No longer are you going to construct it and not occupy it. You are going to occupy the state. And as you occupy the state, it is going to work.

You can do that with a job. A friend of mine in New York City – he came from out west. He was an engineer, and he said, "Neville, I want more money and I want more responsibility. I want to work for a certain firm."

I said, "Do you know where they are?

He said, "Yes, on Madison Avenue. They do international work. They build bridges, they build dams; they build things all over the world. And I would like a job that would send me away because I could get three times the salary."

I said, "Well now, go to the place and see where you would sit if you got the job there. Before they send you off, you would work in the home office first, wouldn't you?"

He said, "I think so."

"Well, go up there and just take a good look."

He walked into the place, picked out the desk, picked out the place; and then he assumed, when he got back home, he was seated at that desk, and that was his job, and he named the sum of money, which was a considerable sum of money. He and his wife and daughter used to come to my meetings. Within a month he was in that job, and within two weeks he was on his way to the Near East, building bridges.

Unfortunately in a way, he did not live very long. He was a young man. But in about three years he was gone. He had a heart attack, and he was gone. But he would have gone anyway, whether he was here or there, for we come on time and we go on time. But at least, before he departed this world, he found the Principle, which he will carry with him into the next world, for there is no "death." He is restored to life in a world just like this, clothed in a body just like this, only young. Young as he was then, he'll be younger. But he has at least the memory of what he did to get what he wanted, and it worked. So, now he goes with the Principle in his mind's eye.

So, when you tell me of your dreams, and that you in your dreams are applying this Principle, like the lady tonight – she is here. She told me her dream. I asked her to write it out for me. But right in the dream she is actually discussing with others this principle of imagining and how you imagine a certain state and you produce it in this world; and that there is nothing in this world that dies. All things are restored to life, and she is carrying on this conversation in her dream. Well, that's most flattering and very thrilling, when you can carry it beyond into what the world would tell you is a state where you are not in control of vision; that you are simply the slave of vision rather than its master. You don't direct it; you simply follow it. Well, she didn't follow it; she directed vision.

When you get to the point that you can direct in what they call a state called "dream," where you are not supposed to be in control but you are simply the victim of your vision – well, she is not the victim of her vision; she actually controlled the vision. So the day will come – it's inevitable – we all take off the garment. But I tell you that you are going to find yourself completely restored instantly – not waiting for anything – instantly restored – in a terrestrial world with the problems that you have here, but you will know how to solve them. You will solve the problems because you know the Principle.

So, the Flood is on. The whole Bible, from beginning to end, is contemporary. Jesus is not something that died. He is something that lives within man, and he is dwelling in man.

God Himself came, and comes, into human history in the person of Jesus in you – in me – in every one in the world. And the day will come, you will know it when you are the Lord Jesus, but asleep to what you are. The day will come, you will be completely awake to the fact that you are the Father, and then you will know.

I have been asked, "Why do you express it all the time?" This is important. It is so important – the Father is the most important part of Scripture – the most important part of Scripture. Oh, I can have all the power in the world and yet not know I am God! I can have a sense of awareness where there is not a thing in the world but myself, and yet not feel that I am God. But when the

Father comes and I know that I am the father of that one and only Son of His, then I know I am God! There's no other way to know it.

If I had the power that I could destroy the universe, I still wouldn't know I am God. And if I was completely aware, as I was in 1926 while reading a book, it fell upon my chest – it must have been not more than 10:00 o'clock; when I woke next morning, it's 9:00, and I had not turned from left to right in the entire interval, because the book was still on my chest and the light was still on by my bed.

Usually in the course of the night, a man turns often from side to side. How often, I do not know, but they all do. No one goes to bed on his back and remains there for nine unbroken – or, in this case, almost eleven unbroken hours.

So, I went right down into a deep, deep sleep in a trance; and in that state, I became Infinite Light. There was nothing but light, and I was It. There was no circumference. I was the center of it all – no light outside of this Light that I am. No sun, no moon, no stars; but nothing outside of the Being that I am. I was infinite, pulsing Light. But still, I did not bring back the feeling of being God. That evaded me. But when you see His Son, and that Son calls you "Father," then you know; and there is no doubt in your mind as to Who-You-Are. That's why I say this is the most important part of Scripture, and yet it's the one thing that people will question me on: "Why do you emphasize it? Why do you repeat it over and over?" Because it's the one thing in the world that you will – one day – experience which will convince you that you are God. Not a thing in the world will convince you outside of that.

But in the meanwhile, we can penetrate the facts. The man imprisoned need not be behind bars. We are imprisoned by the things that we do. All right, we can break them – break anything in this world. A man can be imprisoned by gluttony. He can break it if he knows what he wants. Maybe he doesn't really want to give it up. If he wants to give it up, let him create within his mind's eye a scene – a simple scene – that if he had given it up, a friend or some relative would know. He doesn't brag about it; they simply know, and there is a normal discussion that he has no longing for it any more. He has no desire for it. He didn't take any drugs for it; he didn't do anything to feed it. Just simply – it wasn't there. That certain taste that we have in this world – all of a sudden – you've had it; you are saturated with it, and you don't want it any more. All things are acquired.

Today, I like – for instance – a thing called an oyster. I love them, especially those lovely eastern oysters. But the first time I had an oyster, I thought I'd die.

I was a small boy. I must have been about nine or ten, and I went down to the – it was then called the Virgin Islands – owned by Denmark; they are now our islands, St. Thomas, St. John and Santa Cruz. And my mother said to me, "Now, Neville, you know, you are going to a strange place, and they speak Danske. You don't understand the language but you'll get by. You are going to a boarding house where there may be twenty or twenty-five boarding. You will all sit at one big table together. Now you are a boy, and you do not know their habits; so watch what the lady does; and whatever she does, you do it."

I sat down at the table, and here was this plate of oysters. I had never seen oysters in my life before, and then all the little things before it. I saw this lady take a little fork from the side; so I picked up my fork, and then she took a little horseradish, she took something else, then a little Tabasco and did all these things to it; and then she stuck it into this oyster and dipped it into all that she had done; she closed her eyes and ate it as though she had honey in her mouth. I expected the same thing; so I did the same thing. And when I got that thing in my mouth, – Lord! It wouldn't go down, and I couldn't bring it up. I'm not supposed to bring it up – Mother told me that. So, here it stuck.

But the funny part about it, I not only had that one; I looked down to find there were five others, and they had to go down. Well, that was my introduction to oysters. But now today I love them. I have acquired the taste for oysters.

The first time I had a drink, I can't tell anyone that it was something like honey to me; but I acquired the taste, and today I fairly enjoy a drink. I try not to go beyond a certain point, because I want to keep my faculties alive. But I enjoy a drink.

I've tried and tried and tried to acquire a taste for smoking, but I can't. Therefore I gave that up after I tried it for about six months, and I couldn't do it. I was then only twenty-one or twenty-two, and I couldn't seem to enjoy a cigarette, a cigar or anything. It made me sick. So, I gave it up; I never acquired it.

But all the other things we have acquired. We don't come into the world with these tastes; we acquire these tastes. You can acquire the taste of living in comfort. You can acquire the taste of living as a gentleman, or a lady. Acquire the taste. If you want to actually live like a lady, live like a gentleman, with no pressure to pay the rent, no pressure to do these things – all right. Assume that you are that lady; you are that gentleman. Penetrate the facts. The facts tell you that you are not; you don't have it. Penetrate the facts and live in the state as though you had it. And may I tell you from experience, you'll have it. You will actually have it! Don't ask me how. The ways and means are contained within the state that you enter.

So, you enter a state. It contains all that is necessary to externalize that state. So, pick out your state – a lovely state – and go right into that state and dwell in it. I call that "occupying the state" and thinking from it instead of thinking of it, just as you now think from your present state with all the facts around you to anchor you into it. Get into another state, all in your imagination, and the facts will appear to anchor you into that state. And the day you tire of it, you can get out of it and go into another state.

You know when you move into a new home or move to a new city, you have to actually adjust yourself to it. Well, you are the Pilgrim passing through unnumbered states. The states remain, but you – the Pilgrim – pass through them, like a traveler passing through a city. The city remains, but you – the traveler – pass through it. So, you go right into another city. You don't rub out the state. Poverty remains a state when a man who was once poor moves out of it. He moves out of the state of poverty into the state of affluence, but he doesn't destroy the state of poverty. Anyone can fall into it.

As Blake said: "I do not consider the just or the unjust to be in a supreme state, but only to be in these states of sleep which the soul may fall into in its deadly dreams of good and evil." [From "A Vision of the Last Judgment"]

Now let us go into the silence.